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❖ "CULTURE!" ❖

DRAWING-ROOM COMEDIETTA.

*Adapted from a Foreign Source, and
Slightly Altered.*

By

Halifax, N. S.,
December, 1896.



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HALIFAX PRINTING COMPANY
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SYNOPSIS OF THE COMEDIETTA.

HENRY HARRIS, a young Englishman, rather a prig, perhaps a bit of a snob, has married in Halifax. His wife, BELLA, a charming young woman, has had, mainly, a home education. Her husband, who sets up for being a man of intellect, is inclined to snub her in consequence. Taking this to heart, she secretly devotes herself to study; attends classes and lectures at Dalhousie, and works at the Art School, and rather neglects her home duties. HENRY becomes suspicious of her mysterious movements, and abuses her to her mother-in-law, who lives with them, for her seeming frivolity and dissipation. MRS. HARRIS, the mother-in-law, reveals her daughter's secret to quiet him. HENRY is delighted at first with his wife's course of study and her learning, but is soon overwhelmed with the flood of erudition she lets loose upon him, and has cause to regret the days of her ignorance and simplicity. He proceeds to wean her from her new studies by an increased display of affection, and finally accomplishes his purpose by proposing a compensatory tour in Europe, during which they will renew their honeymoon together.

The author does not hold himself personally responsible for the opinions of Mr. Henry Harris, who is as depicted above, and is only painted in character.

“CULTURE.”

AN ADAPTATION FROM A FOREIGN SOURCE.

By * * * *

IN THREE SCENES.

SCENE I.

A boudoir nicely furnished, connected by a portiere with the dining room. Fire in the grate. Lamp lighted. Table, arm chairs and a sofa.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

HENRY HARRIS, an Englishman in the Dominion
Service, married some three years to a ‘Colonial,’
a nice fellow, but rather a prig.....
MRS. MORRIS, his mother-in-law
BELLA, his wife.....
CHARLES } Servants {
MARIA }
The scene is laid in Harris’ house, Halifax, N. S.

Henry alone. Walks up and down the room in a pre-occupied manner, consulting his watch occasionally.

Charles (enters and places the evening papers on the table)

Henry—Have the ladies come in yet?

Charles—Mrs. Morris is in, Sir, but Mrs. Harris is not.
(Exit.)

Henry (continues his walk up and down the room.)

Mrs. Morris (enters.) Good evening, Harry. Hasn't Bella come home yet?

Henry—Good evening. No, she has not.

Mrs. Morris—(Seating herself.) Poor child! Anyway it is only seven o'clock.

Henry--Yes, and she has only been out since twelve!

Mrs. Morris—(Without answering, takes up some work from a work-basket and begins to knit.)

Henry—(Walks up and down the room again; then, stopping opposite his mother-in-law.) I'd like to know mother, what you think of the way Bella is now going on? What sort of life is this for her to lead?

Mrs. Morris—A very pleasant and proper sort of life, I call it. She spends her time as most young married women do, in Halifax, shopping in the mornings, receiving and paying visits in the afternoon, and you know what a place this is for visiting.

Henry—I do, to my cost. There is no end to it. Why every newcomer into the place should be deluged with paste board from people whose hospitality begins and ends at the door post, is quite beyond me. Why call on people you have not the means, perhaps not the wish to entertain?

Mrs. Morris—In Rome you must do as Rome does. It is the fashion of the place, and, I think, a kindly one. To resume. Much of Bella's time is taken up with visiting. Then, there's the rink in winter, lawn tennis in the summer months. We go to most of the five o'clock teas. Epidemic just at present. They came in with the measles. Besides, Bella has her Orpheus rehearsals; and, then, there are those theatricals, in which you should be proud to see her taking so prominent a part. I don't know what you have to grumble at, as, now that you have given up going out anywhere, I accompany her myself into society.

Henry—(Angrily.) Society indeed — pretty society! Society of frivolous matrons, whose sole aim in life consists in providing entertainment and flirting material for the garri-

son, and forward minxes of girls whose bare-faced *chasse à l'homme* may be vastly amusing to their wary quarry, however disgusting to the neglected civilian spectator—for, needless to say, in this sport also, 'tis Reynard who dons the scarlet and not his pursuer.

Mrs. Morris—The female heart is always weak, my dear Harry, where the red coats are concerned.

Henry—(Continues excitedly, without heeding her.) Society of *habberdashers and fishmongers, needy lawyers and unscrupulous politicians, whose greed of place and its emoluments is only equalled by their pomposity. I might say this for them—their womankind are often worse than themselves. I shall never forget my first experience with one of them.

Mrs. Morris—Your experience has evidently made you very bitter, Harry. What was it.

Henry—(Continues, excitedly.) It was a wedding party shortly after we came here. The guests had gone into luncheon. One lady, the wife of a prominent politician, had been left in the drawing room. I was told off by the host, being the only man available, to escort her. Taking my arm with evident reluctance, and with an air of offended dignity, "I am afraid, Mr. Harris," she remarked, "the question of precedence has been forgotten on this occasion." (In a mimicing tone.)

Mrs. Morris—Oh! snobbery in excelsis. What did you do, Harry?

Henry—I felt rather small, I confess, but said nothing, and planted her speedily on the nearest chair to chew the cut of her mortification. She got no other provender from me at that luncheon.

Mrs. Morris—Capital! It was probably of the same lady I heard a similar story, to-day. She was calling on the wife of a political swell at Ottawa who was a guest in

* So certain of our most prominent merchants have been described, at least we are credibly informed so.

the house of a quiet but highly respectable family in Halifax. Turning to this lady, in the presence of her hostess, she said: "My dear Mrs. Blank, when next you come down here, I hope you will allow me to show you some of our *best* Halifax society."

Henry—The inference was obvious.

Mrs. Morris—It was very impertinent. But I fear, Harry, your home life has unfitted you for our free and easy ways in the colonies. Society here is very much mixed, but you must not condemn the whole on account of a few vulgar people who have forced their way into it. You must be more tolerant, even of our political upstarts—their elevation often times turns their heads, particularly the woman's—then you must consider their lack of experience—often even, of education.

Henry—I can tolerate anything so that people be natural and unassuming. What was it the Prince said of the American women in London?

Mrs. Morris—"That he liked them the more because they were so delightfully and naturally vulgar." But, to return to our muttons, what has made you so abominably cross with Bella, lately?

Henry—I think you can guess. For the first couple of years of our married life, you know how well Bella and I got on together. But, for the past six months or so her conduct has been outrageous. She is never at home now. Out of doors as soon as breakfast is over, she scarcely gets back for dinner, and, when I try to find out how she passes her time, she seems embarrassed and evasive. I am not inclined to suspicion, nor am I jealous, but I confess to a little anxiety.

Mrs. Morris—If you will look back, my dear Harry, I think you will find that your wife only adopted this seemingly frivolous life from the time you began to neglect her. You affected, at one time, to despise her society. You never cared to be tête-a-tête with her. Why, I have seen you myself go to sleep in her presence after dinner—a pretty sight, indeed, for a newly married woman!

Henry—And whose fault was that? The fact is, Bella and I haven't an idea in common. She had never a word to say on the subjects that interested me.

Mrs. Morris—You talked politics to her, perhaps!

Henry—I *have* talked politics, but not politics only. I have tried every theme—art, literature, history—none of them did she care for. I had no idea when I married that Bella was so wanting in culture. The great mistake of the day is that men and women rush into matrimony knowing next to nothing of each other really. But *you* must have been aware of Bella's deficiencies, and *you* knew *me* also, and knew what *I* expected in my wife. You knew that, without quite despising the pleasures of society, I was a man of serious views and habits—a busy man—and, if I may venture to say so, a man of intellect. On the other hand, you know your daughter to be a girl of frivolous habits and uncultivated mind, with no thought of the higher life. How could you have expected the union of two such dissimilar natures to be a happy one?

Mrs. Morris—I brought up my daughter at home, and could only teach her what I knew myself.

Henry—I don't pretend to find fault with you, mother. But now-a-days, you know, we expect of young ladies a knowledge and accomplishments your generation did not exact. Wanting the necessary acquirements yourself, you should have provided other teachers for Bella. After all, what *did* you teach her?

Mrs. Morris—I taught her politeness, at all events.

Henry—I'm hanged if you taught her her bible history! At the Academy, during our honeymoon, I remember showing her that celebrated picture of Salomé carrying the head of St. John the Baptist. She turned and asked me who Salomé was! Out loud too! The people round began to sneer. Such ignorance mortifies a husband and makes him dread taking his wife into society.

Mrs. Morris—I confess that in teaching my daughter her sacred history, I did not go deeply into the story of Salomé.

Henry—The fact of the matter is that you are too old-fashioned in your ideas. You make no account of the march of intellect—of modern progress. On the subject of the higher education of women, you are, excuse me, roccoco. You laugh at our ladies colleges, our art school. How different things might have been, if, instead of educating Bella at home, you had given her the benefit of these institutions.

Mrs. Morris—Perhaps you are right. Still in the colonies, I consider, we need a simpler education. A mother's duty, first, should be to perfect, at home, the moral and religious training of her daughter. Next, to give her the elements of general instruction and the minor accomplishments, such as music and drawing—to make her a perfect housewife, well posted in prices and the management of her servants. She should be taught to sew, to make her own dresses, to cook her own dinner even—then we should have more economy below and much less dyspepsia above stairs. She should also have a slight smattering of hygiène and the care of the sick, to complete her home training. In my opinion, a school of cookery, in this country, and a few practical lectures on nursing, would be worth twenty art schools.

Henry—Very practical, indeed, mother, but scarcely the training for the wife of a man of culture !

Mrs. Morris—I should have preferred her to marry a man of good taste, who would have taken a pleasure in forming the mind of his wife, in developing her natural talents and enlarging her experience. Such a man she would have looked up to, and loved, for the very pains he took for her improvement. But you, I suppose, would have preferred one of the latest type of womanhood—a well-crammed girl graduate, sent forth from the lecture hall, armed cap a pie in science, like Minerva from the brain of Jupiter. I know it's the craze now to force young girls brains to the uttermost. But don't you think in the process, they may acquire knowledge their future husbands would gladly

dispense with—ideas and opinions at variance with their own—acquirements they may be wanting in! Suppose the woman's superiority in those respects should make her look down on her lord and master? As a mother, I would prefer to initiate as it were the intellectual education of my daughter—leaving to her husband, or to herself, (in later life) a cleared ground for a more scientific superstructure. I have done *my* duty in this respect; let me ask have *you* done what I consider to be yours?

Henry—I should like to know what Bella would have said if I had proposed to give her two or three hours' schooling every morning? She could not have got on with less.

Mrs. Morris—It was not school lessons she needed. From day to day, in the ordinary course of life, you might have seized opportunities to improve her mind as I have already indicated.

Henry—Really! The subject is a delicate one, and I would like to respect your maternal predilections, but I fear you overestimate your daughter's capacity. Bella is so thoroughly frivolous, that I consider her incapable of the least intellectual exertion.

Mrs. Morris—Excuse me, Harry, but you make me laugh. (Bursts out laughing.)

Henry—(Getting angry.) I see nothing whatever to laugh at. This frivolity of which Bella has more than her share is anything but laughable. It is a positive danger. A moral disorder. How many women has it not led to the neglect of their home duties—to all manner of extravagances—if not to worse. Amongst all these society people who pass their time in gadding about from shop to shop, in dancing and flirting and gossiping at five o'clock teas, or in lonely walks and drives with the other sex for sole companion, how many are desirable associates for your daughter? Not to put too fine a point upon it, and sorry as I am to have to say it, this life of Bella's is causing her to lose my confidence.

Mrs. Morris—Allow me, Sir——

Henry—Allow me, Madam. Her present life is not only frivolous, but there is a mystery about it. Bella is no longer frank with me. More than once I have found her deceiving me as to the employment of her time. She locks herself up in her room. She has secret drawers where she hides things—letters most likely. Three days ago, entering her dressing room unexpectedly, I caught her secreting some papers in a recess. When she saw me, she blushed up to the eyes.

Mrs. Morris—Well, upon my word! this is too much, I can't hold out any longer. It is you, Sir, who should blush up to the eyes. Do you know what she was hiding away, this frivolous, empty-headed girl, (imitating him) who was incapable of the least intellectual exertion? Why most probably, the note books of her college lectures, or her drawings for the art school.

Henry—You don't mean to say so!

Mrs. Morris—But I do mean to say so. And that is not all of it, Bella is now preparing for the next examination at Dalhousie, and hopes to get her B. A. degree in August. Now you know how she has passed her spare time this last year! Her days are mostly taken up in attending her classes; and, when she shuts herself up in her room, it is either to rewrite her notes or to correct her drawings for her masters. Ah! I see this has touched you. There are tears in your eyes. They make some amends for your late impertinences. (She takes his hand) Were you really getting anxious?

Henry—Very anxious, at times, mother.

Mrs. Morris—Yet you continued to love her, in spite of all her seeming frivolity?

Henry—With all my heart, mother. But how can I thank you?

Mrs. Morris—You need not thank me at all, my dear Henry. You must thank Bella herself. The idea originated with her. In fact I opposed it. I saw certain inconveniences, but she insisted on it. In this way, mamma,

said she, I will leave him no excuse for neglecting me. Ah! here she comes. She will be terribly irate with me for betraying her secret. She wished her degree to be a surprise for you.

Bella—Here I am. A little late, perhaps, but (she stops, noticing the embarrassed look of her husband). Why, what's the matter?

Mrs. Morris—*Bella*, I know you will scold me, but Harry was fast losing his head, becoming suspicious in fact, I had to tell him.

Bella—(In a tone of reproach.) Oh! mamma!

Henry—Give me a kiss. (They embrace.) My poor darling! What an angel you have been.

Bella—And you are really pleased with me?

Charles (enters.) Dinner is served.

(Exeunt through the portiere.)

CURTAIN.

SCENE II.

A dining-room connected by a portiere with the boudoir. Table laid for three persons. *Mrs. Morris*, *Henry* and *Bella* (seat themselves at the table. *Charles* waits on them)

Henry—What surprises me most is that none of your friends let out your secret.

Bella—I took good care of that. But you have no idea what a number of ruses I had to adopt, what a lot of fibs I had to tell!

Henry—You must show me your note books and sketches. They will be awfully amusing!

Bella—You shall have them.

Henry—And you really mean to go up for a degree?

Bella—Yes, and I mean to get it.

Henry—But you know it is not easy. The examination is a stiff one.

Bella—I know that, but I will work hard for it; besides we have such splendid teachers.

Henry—What good times they must have with you ladies. (To Mrs. Morris) Do you go with Bella to those lectures?

Mrs. Morris—Only to some of them. It depends on who lectures.

Bella—You did right, Mamma, not to come this evening. We were fifteen in the little class room, with a hot stove and the gas lighting. I was nearly smothered. There was a deficiency of oxygen in the room. Nothing in the air but azote and carbonic acid.

Henry—Brava! So you are well up in chemistry?

Bella—Only the elements. Suppose you ask me some questions? Not too hard, please!

Henry—Some questions. What! upon chemistry?

Bella—Yes, upon chemistry.

Henry—What's the good? It's not worth while. We'll take your word for it.

Mrs. Morris—But do. Just to please her, Harry.

Henry—Well then. Hold on. Chemistry. Let me see. What is gas?

Bella—What gas?

Henry—Why! lighting gas to be sure. The gas up there. (Points to the gaselier.)

Bella—That is hydrogen.

Henry—Capital. That will do. (To Mrs. Morris.) She knows all about it.

Mrs. Morris—I must say I prefer the electric lights to your hydrogen, if they would only keep it going, and if those horrid poles, with their wires, did not make our poor old town look like an overgrown banjo with all the strings awry.

Bella—Henry, please to pass me the chloride of sodium.

Henry—(After a little hesitation, hands her a bottle of Vichy water which is near him.)

Bella—That's not it ; Henry, I said chloride of sodium, and you give me the Vichy water. Chloride of sodium—the salt in fact—that's what I want.

Henry—Oh ! chloride of sodium. Here you are—(hands her the salt cellar.) Well, my dear, are you as well up in history as you are in chemistry ? But I suppose they only require English History for your examinations.

Bella—In the junior classes ? Yes ; but in the higher, we have to make up Universal History—and I have studied a great part of it already.

Henry—Indeed ! So you know all about Salomè now, don't you ?

Bella—I should think so. (Recites like a lesson) “ Salomè was the daughter of Herodias, Herod's second wife. Herodias was Herod's sister-in-law, and it was this marriage, which the Jews considered illegal, that provoked the reproaches and denunciation of St. John the Baptist. In revenge, Herodias determined to have the life of the Saint. She asked his head of Herod through her daughter Salome, who had fascinated Herod by her charms in dancing. There is even reason to suppose that Salome's relations with that Prince were more than equivocal ; but what could you expect in such a family ?

Henry—Enough of that, Bella !

Bella—(Continues, unheeding.) Mr. Bryant says it is a reasonable hypothesis that there was something wrong between them, and that it is impossible to explain otherwise than by the blindness of passion, this inhuman act of Herod's, who was naturally humane.

Henry—What ! Herod humane ? What about the massacre of the innocents, my dear ?

Bella—Pardon me, Harry, but I think you have got your Herods a little mixed. The one who massacred the innocents, your Herod, was Herod the great, who reigned in the time of Christ, whereas my Herod, Salome's Herod, was Herod Antipas, who lived many years after.

Henry—Are you sure of that, Bella ?

Bella—Quite sure, my dear.

Henry—After all, these Herods are mighty confusing.

Mrs. Morris—(Coughs discreetly.) Ahem! ahem!

Henry—You observed, mother?

Mrs. Morris—Oh! nothing, Henry.

Henry—(A little confused.) How nice these lobster rissoles are? My poor Bella, how bothered you must have been all those months with this hard work?

Bella—Not at all. You know what the poet says—

“’Tis sweet our labouring steps to guide
To virtue’s heights, with wisdom well supplied.”

Henry—From Pope? Very good; and how appropriate, Bella!

Bella—(Quietly.) The verses are not Pope’s; they are Dryden’s.

Henry—(Hurriedly.) Of course. I was only setting a trap for you—to see if you were well up in your English classics.

Mrs. Morris—Ahem! ahem! (coughs discreetly.)

Henry—And have you written any poetry yourself, Bella?

Bella—Nothing much—a sonnet or two. By the way, did you see those lines of mine in the Art School Journal, called “A Faux Pas” and its consequences?

Henry—Did you write that?

Bella—I did. Don’t you think it Swinburnian?

Henry—I do. Very much *after* Swinburne.

Henry—Apropos. Have you read Sappho?

Bella—I have, and in the original French too! (Alludes to Alphonse Daudet’s Sappho, which has recently appeared. Bella is probably ignorant of the original or apocryphal Sappho in Greek.)

Henry—You are progressing, darling.

Bella—(excited) And Mr. Bryant thinks we may soon take up Zola.

Henry—I should like to see him taken up extremely.

Mrs. Morris—Judge Hawkins, at all events, has just given him a proper set down.

Henry—By the way (uncovers dish which Charles has

placed upon the table) what's this joint? Beef again? Come, I say, Bella, I don't want to find fault; but why, in the name of heaven, don't you give us lamb or veal sometimes, instead of this eternal beef and mutton? I am sick of them!

Bella—My dear Henry, veal and lamb are, as you ought to know, made up almost altogether of fibrin and albumen; they are both unwholesome, particularly for you, who are so lymphatic.

Henry—Lymphatic, indeed! Are you studying medicine by any chance, dear?

Bella—A little; but I have gone in principally for Hygiene and Physiology. By the way, Henry, I wish you would use saccharine in your tea and coffee, instead of sugar.

Henry—Why, what's the odds? Isn't sugar full of saccharine?

Bella—I thought you knew more of chemistry. Why saccharine is a Benzoyl Sulphonic, Imide. It is obtained from coal tar, and possesses three hundred times the sweetening power of sugar. Besides, it is a non-carbonaceous or non-fat-forming substance, and passes unchanged out of the system. It would be invaluable to you, who are threatened with obesity.

Henry—Lymphatic and obese! What next, I wonder!

Bella—By the way, I have noticed lately, a strong smell of carburated hydrogen about the house. Our sanitary arrangements must be faulty?

Henry—What else could you expect, when our city fathers use up our taxes in building sewers across the Common—where they are not needed, and leave us here in the centre of the city, where they are indispensable, without any! No wonder we are over-run with measles, typhoid and diphtheria.

Bella—Why don't they build them here, dear?

Henry—Simpleton. No alderman owns property in this neighbourhood!

Mrs. Morris—You are eating nothing, Henry.

Henry—Thanks, I'm not hungry, though I had a good walk this evening. I went up to Cunard's to enquire about the "Polynesian."

Bella—Has she reached England yet?

Henry—She "arrived out" last Sunday.

Bella—Fie, Henry! what a hideous expression. We shall soon have you talking of the train being "on time," or hear that you have taken "a ride on the horse cars."

Henry—And why not? We see these expressions every day in the papers.

Mrs. Morris—Would to heaven we never saw anything worse there (takes papers from side table) Any new scandal this evening? How many murders? How sick I am of this daily dish of horrors from over the border! And of their sporting notes and brutal prize fights; and their long-winded political articles, with their persistent iteration of free trade and protection, confederation, prohibition and annexation!

Henry—Your remark reminds me of the Barrack Master's, when he contemplated his scanty fatigue party on a Saturday—"What with education, confirmation and vaccination, I'm d—d if I can get the Barracks cleaned!"

Mrs. Morris—Our papers would be the better for a little scouring.

Henry—Suppose we begin by dusting an editor!

Bella—That has been tried already, and not too successfully.

Henry—(looking through paper) By the way, I see the advertisement of another Japanese goods sale.

Bella—Will you go, Harry, and buy something.

Henry—No, thank you, the house is full of it already. Why, I wash now in the purest of Satsuma ware, shave in a moon mirror; and even the bath-room is decorated with kakamonias, or whatever Francis called them, to say nothing of other Japanese art paper.

(They rise from table, and pass through the portiere into Boudoir.)

Maria—(entering hastily) What on earth were they jawing about? We could hear them down in the kitchen. (Henry comes back and raises the portiere.)

Charles—(not seeing him) You just missed it, my girl. You oughter 'ave been 'ere. The missis was a pullin' master's leg all the time at dinner. I thought I'd 'ave busted! (Turns and sees Henry.)

Henry—(furious) Go and get my cigarette case.

Charles—Yes, sir. (Exeunt Charles and Maria flying.)

Henry—This is unbearable! (Exit.)

(CURTAIN.)

SCENE III.

The Boudoir again. *Mrs Morris* and *Bella*.

Bella—What, mamma! Is it possible? Did he really mistrust me?

Mrs. Morris—Not mistrust you exactly, dear; but he was getting uneasy. A little jealous, perhaps. You need not mind that, darling.

(Henry enters.)

Bella—So, you naughty boy, you were getting jealous of me, were you?

Henry—Not at all. Only I could not fathom these mysterious goings on.

Bella—You had no cause for alarm,

“Though in this wicked world there's no vice
Of which the saints have not a spice.”

Henry—Very reasoning that, certainly. Is it original. From another of your odes, probably.

Bella—(laughing) Don't be odious (running off) And now, hubby, I'm off to get my note books and drawings just to show you what pains I have been at to please you, though

"'Tis not in mortals to command success,
But we'll do more, Simpronious, we'll deserve it."

(She runs out, then coming back and lifting the portiere) Whose verses are these?

Henry—Why Shakespeare's, of course.

Bella—You donkey! they are from Addison's Cato.
(Exit laughing.)

(Henry walks up and down the room smoking a cigarette, then throws it into the fire, and seats himself despondently.)

Mrs. Morris—Why, Harry, you look worried.

Henry—Worried, not exactly—bored, perhaps.

Mrs. Morris—And why bored? You wanted a learned wife. Now you have got one—what more do you want?

Henry—I discovered a well-informed wife, certainly, but I did not want a learned one, not a confounded pedant always to the fore with her insupportable erudition. Why, one can't say a word now before Bella without some scientific commentary from her! If not that, she presumes to correct one's language, or treats one to a poetical quotation. It is simply disgusting!

Mrs. Morris—At all events, you can no longer complain that she is wanting in conversation.

Henry—Conversation indeed! Why it's a lecture!

Mrs. Morris—(getting angry) You should understand, Henry, that it is only natural for Bella to delight in showing off her acquirements before you, who used to reprove her for her ignorance. It is rather disagreeable at first, I admit, but she will tone down after a while, believe me.

Henry—Let us hope so! In the meantime, there is one thing to which I wish you would draw Bella's attention. She *must not* take on herself to set me right when, by accident, or lapse of memory, I have made a mistake. It makes one ridiculous even in the eyes of one's servants. Besides, let me tell you, her studies appear to be ill-directed. She is learning a thousand useless things, things to my mind quite beyond her sphere and above her capacity. All this sort of thing is overdone. This æsthetic education is throwing our

old fashioned schooling into the back ground. What with Esoteric Buddhism as a scientific *Theology*, Faith Healing in lieu of *Medicine*, and chinoiseries as the latest expression of *High Art*, we may well discard our old-fashioned university faculties.

Mrs. Morris—My dear Harry, I think we are fast losing our own.

Henry—Then all this physiology, sanitation and stuff, such studies must deprave her taste, and are not expected of a lady in good society.

Mrs. Morris—Quite my way of thinking. But let me repeat what I've already said to you. If you had taken her in hand yourself, you might have taught her what you desired her to know, and left out what you wished her to be ignorant of. Your present attitude is most contradictory. When your wife showed herself ignorant and frivolous, your absurd vanity was wounded. Now that she studies and takes all manner of pains to improve herself, your self-love is up in arms immediately. Do you want the child to lose her head? You are going the right way about it. You may lose her heart too, by this conduct. I give you fair warning. You are not a fool. Take care what you are about then! (She rose to leave the room.)

Henry—Don't go, mother. Don't leave me in such a quandary. You are a sensible woman. Give me the benefit of your advice. I should like Bella to give up these studies and devote herself as before to me and the household. How can I make her do so, without hurting her feelings?

Mrs. Morris—Come down from your high horse, in the first place. Speak to her from your heart. This goes further with us women than anything.

(Bella returns with her arms full of books and drawings.)

Bella—Here I am. Look! here's my matriculation certificate. (Shows it.)

Henry—Give it me, dear, I will keep it as the most precious souvenir.

Bella—Ah! how nice you are now! And here are my note books.

Henry—(taking them) Poor child! how hard you must have worked! And what's this great roll of paper?

Bella—That is one of my drawings from life, done at the Art School.

Henry—I don't think as much of the Art School as I did. This does not seem the place for it. You need a wealthy town with large manufactures for such a school to do good and prosper. Your High Schools and Art Schools are simply draining the country, turning the rising young men and mechanics into pauper counter-jumpers and indifferent artists. What market is there for their talents here, if they show any? They must inevitably leave us for the States. Besides, we are beginning at the wrong end, it strikes me. Let us straighten out our pavements first, and brush up our old wooden houses; drain our streets, and plant trees in them; then, when the city has grown and prospered, it will be time enough for an Art School. Still, you must not think me dissatisfied with your work. It is charming! Stick to your drawings, dear, if you wish it, but to please me, *do* give up the degree.

Bella—Oh no! I must have my degree!

Henry—I thought it was to please me you went in for it?

Bella—Certainly, it was to please you, at first, but after.

Henry—But after?

Bella—But after, it was to please myself; and I thought, from the day I obtained it, you would think so much more of me. You would cease to look on me as a dunce, and talk to me as you tried to at first, before I knew anything of Science or Art, or Political Economy.

Henry—My dear, I can do that without taxing this little brain here (patting her head.) You are more than a match for me in some things already. A little more learning, and I should be in dread of you! What will tempt you to forego this degree you have worked so hard for?

Bella—Give me back the old love, dear, that really might tempt me.

Henry—You have never lost it, darling. But suppose we begin our married life all over again. When shall we start on our honeymoon? The "Parisian" leaves here on Saturday. What say you to Paris and the great Exhibition?

Bella—Oh, you darling! Do you really mean it? (he nods) Then here go my note books and sketches (throws them into the fire.) Good bye, Dalhousie, and hurrah for the Exhibition.

Henry—Give me a kiss, dear, as an instalment to begin the new life with. (Kisses her.) To-morrow we will set about packing.

Bella—The bargain is made, and sealed (kisses him.)

Mrs. Morris (aside) He's not such a fool after all.

(Aloud) Bless you, my children. (TABLEAU.)

(CURTAIN.)